

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising:
- receiving a communication from a first communication device, the communication having associated therewith a first identifying information;
- authenticating a user of the first communication device; and
- replacing the first identifying information with second identifying information.
2. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
- retrieving the second identifying information as a function of an identity of the user as authenticated.
3. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
- receiving the second identifying information from the user via the first communication device.
4. The method of claim 3 further comprising:
- prompting the user to enter the second identifying information.
5. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
- providing to the user via the first communication device a plurality of predetermined sets of alternate identifying information; and
- receiving from the user a selection of one of the predetermined sets of alternate identifying information to use as the second identifying information.
6. The method of claim 1 wherein authenticating the user comprises:
- receiving from the user via the first communication device authentication data; and
- comparing the authentication data against a set of known-authentic data.
7. The method of claim 6 wherein the authentication data comprise a PIN.

1 8 The method of any of claims 1-7 further comprising:  
2 connecting the communication to a second communication device; and  
3 presenting the second identifying information to the second communication device.  
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1 9. The method of any of claims 1-7 wherein:  
2 the method is performed in a telephone network;  
3 the first identifying information comprises caller ID information; and  
4 the method further comprises,  
5 connecting the communication to a second communication device, and  
6 presenting the second identifying information to the second communication device.  
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1 10. A method comprising:  
2 receiving a communication from a first communication device;  
3 authenticating a user of the first communication device;  
4 pursuant to authentication of the user, selecting custom ID information;  
5 connecting the communication from the first communication device to a second  
6 communication device; and  
7 delivering the custom ID information to the second communication device.  
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1 11. The method of claim 10 further comprising:  
2 receiving from the user a first input to override a first ID information associated with the first  
3 communication device; and  
4 the delivering of the custom ID information replaces the first ID information with the custom  
5 ID information.  
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1 12. The method of claim 10 wherein the authenticating of the user comprises:  
2 receiving from the user a second input which the user has entered at the first communication  
3 device; and  
4 comparing the second input against a set of known-valid data.  
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1 13. The method of claim 10 further comprising:

2 receiving from the user a third input to select the custom ID information from a plurality of  
3 pre-determined data.

1 14. The method of claim 10 further comprising:  
2 receiving the custom ID information from the user via the first communication device.

1 15. The method of any of claims 10-14 wherein the method is performed in a caller ID service of  
2 a telephone network.

1 16. A method for use in a communication system which includes, coupled to a communication  
2 network, a first communication device, a second communication device, and a custom ID service,  
3 the method comprising the custom ID service:  
4 receiving a communication from the first communication device via the communication  
5 network;  
6 receiving authentication data from the first communication device via the communication  
7 network;  
8 validating the authentication data;  
9 connecting the communication to the second communication device via the communication  
10 network; and  
11 presenting custom ID information to the second communication device via the  
12 communication network.

1 17. The method of claim 16 further comprising:  
2 looking up the custom ID information as a function of the authentication data.

1 18. The method of claim 16 further comprising:  
2 prompting the user to enter the custom ID information; and  
3 receiving the custom ID information from the first communication device via the  
4 communication network.

1 19. The method of claim 16 further comprising:

receiving from the first communication device via the communication network a selection of one of a plurality of predetermined sets of custom ID information.

20. The method of any of claims 16-19 wherein the communication network comprises a telephone network and the custom ID service negotiates with the telephone network to cause the telephone network to deliver the custom ID information as caller ID information.

21. An apparatus for use with first and second communication devices, the apparatus comprising:  
a plurality of communication interfaces through which the communication devices can connect to the apparatus;

a communication routing mechanism, coupled to the plurality of communication interfaces, for connecting the first communication device to the second communication device;

a global ID service, coupled to the communication routing mechanism, for delivering to the second communication device data identifying the first communication device; and

a custom ID service, coupled to the global ID service, for providing custom ID information for delivery to the second communication device.

22. The apparatus of claim 21 wherein the custom ID service comprises:  
means for authenticating a user of the first communication device.

23. The apparatus of claim 22 wherein the custom ID service further comprises:  
means for selecting the custom ID information in response to data identifying the authenticated user.

24. The apparatus of claim 22 wherein the custom ID service further comprises:  
means for receiving the custom ID information from the user.

25. The apparatus of claim 24 wherein the means for receiving the custom ID information comprises:

means for prompting the user to select the custom ID information from a plurality of predetermined sets of data; and

means for receiving a selection from the user.

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1 26. The apparatus of any claim 21-25 wherein the global ID service comprises a caller ID  
2 mechanism and the custom ID information is presented in lieu of caller ID info which would  
3 otherwise have been presented for the first communication device.  
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1 27. An apparatus for use with a communication network having a communication routing  
2 mechanism for connecting a communication from a first communication device to a second  
3 communication device and having an ID service for providing to the second communication device  
4 first ID information associated with the first communication device, the apparatus comprising:  
5 means for coupling to the communication network to receive a communication from the first  
6 communication device;  
7 means for authorizing usage of the apparatus; and  
8 means for providing custom ID information to the communication network for the  
9 communication network to provide to the second communication device.  
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1 28. The apparatus of claim 27 wherein the means for authorizing comprises:  
2 means for receiving a first input data from the first communication device; and  
3 means for comparing the first input data against a plurality of pre-validated data.  
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1 29. The apparatus of claim 27 wherein the means for providing custom ID information  
2 comprises:  
3 means for looking up the custom ID information in response to data from the means for  
4 authorizing.  
5

1 30. The apparatus of claim 27 wherein the means for providing custom ID information  
2 comprises:  
3 means for receiving the custom ID information from the first communication device.  
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1 31. The apparatus of claim 27 wherein the means for providing custom ID information  
2 comprises:  
3 means for prompting a user of the first communication device to select the custom ID  
4 information from a plurality of predetermined data; and

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means for receiving the user's selection.

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